

Introduction

The New River Valley Planning District lies in the ridge and valley province of Virginia. It is comprised of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski counties, and the City of Radford. The 2000 Census recorded a population of 165,146 people. Approximately 35,000 of these are students at Radford University and Virginia Tech. The population in 2005 increased by 2.4 percent to 169,000.

The region's terrain is characterized by long, parallel ridges with intervening valleys. National forest lands blanket the ridges while picturesque farms and towns dot the valleys of the Allegheny Mountains in the west. To the east, the Blue Ridge Parkway follows the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The New River, as it flows north through the center of this area, provides high quality fishing and boating opportunities.

The New River Valley region is home to the first phase of the Wilderness Road Trail and was the doorway to the westward expansion of the United States. The valley's historic heritage is a source of pride for residents and a growing impetus for tourist travel. To date, several historic districts and numerous historic register structures have been designated. The Blacksburg, Newbern and Pulaski historic districts contribute significantly to the valley's quality of life. The Dublin, Newport, Narrows, Eggleston, Prices Fork, Shawsville, Riner, Newbern, Floyd and Pearisburg historic districts are 10 more recent National Historic Register additions in the region. As indicated by the 2006 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* (VOS), visiting historic sites is a popular recreational activity for many Virginia residents. Thus, plans at all levels of government should strive to protect the integrity of these significant regional historic resources.

The character of the region is defined by the New River, an American Heritage River. This most ancient of American rivers is unique from a number of perspectives: geological, biological and historical. As a recreational resource, the river is invaluable, providing a wide range of experiences for fishermen, boaters of all kinds, swimmers and those who enjoy the scenic beauty of the river and the environment it creates. The river also is important from an industrial perspective. Claytor Lake, a hydroelectric power impoundment, is on the New River. This lake provides a 4,475 acre supply of flat water for power boating, sailing, water skiing, fishing and other water sports. Claytor Lake

State Park provides overnight and day use recreational facilities that enhance the public's enjoyment of the lake. Pulaski County's Harry DeHaven Park also is located on Claytor Lake and provides public access and a range of recreational activities.

Public access to the New River is insufficient to meet measured demand, but a joint effort of Appalachian Power Company and Virginia are improving access through the Partners in River Access Program. This innovative program has been used to acquire and construct public access sites on the New River, as well as on the James and Roanoke rivers. With the relicensing of Claytor Dam, there is the potential for identified improvements to be made to public access in the project area.

Four regional recreational sites serve the New River Valley. Mid-County Park in Montgomery County is a 90-acre park that has a variety of facilities, including a swimming pool, picnic areas, play fields and nature trails. The Ellett Nature Area is a 106-acre conservation area that offers a variety of trails and nature study opportunities. In Pulaski County, the Gatewood Reservoir site offers boating, fishing, camping, trail use and nature study opportunities, while Randolph Park offers a wide variety of active recreation facilities.

The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests contain 102,137 acres within this district. Developed recreation areas at the Cascades, Pandapas Pond, White Rocks, Walnut Flats and Interior provide day use and camping opportunities. A new initiative, the historic Glen Alton property, has been acquired by the U.S. Forest Service and is being developed as a major recreation attraction. Trout streams and warm water fisheries provide excellent angling and the diversity of habitats ensure productive hunting. Many miles of trails, including the Appalachian Trail, serve hikers and backpackers in the region. Mountain bicycle and horse trails are also provided in the national forest.

The New River Trail State Park is one of the region's greenway success stories. Linear parks and greenways have been an important part of the New River Valley's quality of life since the development of the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Community based efforts are now underway to link these established greenways with smaller trail systems in the region's towns and with trails in the national for-

est. One example of the ongoing effort is the extension of the Blacksburg Trail System to the Town of Christiansburg via the Huckleberry Trail. This project has resulted in the creation of a significant new linear park through a strategic, public-private initiative organized by Montgomery County. Similar trail systems are being developed in Radford. A regional initiative is underway to connect New River Trail State Park in Pulaski to the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg. This effort will include components of the Wilderness Road Trail, Radford's extensive riverside trail system, and the identification and construction of new trail alignments.

Recommendations applicable to all regions are found in chapters III through IX. To meet needs established in the 2007 *Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP)*, it is important to integrate these recommendations with those that follow for Region 4 into regional and local planning and development strategies.

Outdoor recreation

For a general discussion of outdoor recreation trends, issues and planning considerations in Virginia, see Chapter II: Outdoor Recreation Issues, Trends and Survey Findings, and Chapter VII: Outdoor Recreation Planning and Related Issues.

Based on the findings of the 2006 VOS, the top 10 most popular outdoor activities in Region 4 are walking for pleasure, swimming, driving for pleasure, jogging and running, fishing, hunting, using a playground, visiting natural areas, sunbathing and bicycling, respectively.

The supply of recreational areas and facilities is generally adequate to meet resident demand in developed areas of the region. However, college students and tourists place considerable demand on recreational resources and create shortages of trails, camping and water sport opportunities. In the more rural areas and small towns, there is a need for additional developed recreation facilities. The 2006 VOS indicates a need for additional campsites, playgrounds, football, soccer and softball fields. Also, there is a demand for golf and pool swimming in several area localities (see Table X-4).

The 2006 VOS does not capture imported or seasonal demand of college students or the impact of tourism on the region's recreational opportunities. More than 20 million visitors enjoy outdoor recreational opportuni-

ties in the New River Valley each year. Appropriate management and infrastructure development are critical to ensuring that the region's outdoor resources are not impaired by overuse. For example, the Cascades Trail is one of the most heavily visited hiking trails in the Commonwealth. The Blue Ridge Parkway also receives heavy use not generated by the region's inhabitants.

According to the Commonwealth of Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, *Comparative Report on Local Government Revenues and Expenditures* (year ended June 30, 2005), per capita spending on parks and recreation for each locality in this region was: Floyd County, \$2.70; Giles County, \$32.05; Montgomery County, \$6.57; Pulaski County, \$20.31; and the City of Radford, \$63.20. This compares to a statewide per capita spending on parks and recreation of \$55.31, including \$85.51 from towns, \$43.75 from counties, and \$76.45 per capita spending on parks and recreation from cities in Virginia.

Land conservation

A detailed discussion on statewide awareness of the need for conservation of farmland, parks, natural areas, and historical and cultural resources is found in Chapter III: Land Conservation.

Land Trusts and Conservation Programs in Region 4:

- Virginia Outdoors Foundation
 - New River Land Trust
 - Western Virginia Land Trust
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Trust for Public Lands
 - The Conservation Fund
 - National Committee for the New River
- All localities in region 4 should continue to promote the conservation and preservation of open space through land acquisition, conservation easements, stewardship agreements, the development of agricultural and forestal districts, or any of the many open space protection strategies presented in Chapter III: Land Conservation.

Green infrastructure

Information about green infrastructure is found in Chapter IV: Green Infrastructure.

The New River Valley Green Infrastructure Partnership: Linking Lands and Communities in the New River Valley

www.nrvpdc.org/GreenInfrastructure/greeninfrastructure.html

The Linking Lands and Communities Project began in the fall of 2006 when a number of public and private groups came together to learn more about a proactive and holistic approach to addressing conservation and resource protection in concert with growth and development. The New River Valley Planning District Commission has defined a three-stage process to implement a green infrastructure planning approach for the region. Those stages include:

- Education, outreach, needs assessment and capacity building.
- Integration of existing natural resource and built infrastructure information for formal plan development and land prioritization by the localities and communities.
- Adoption of green infrastructure plan, priorities and implementation process.

Regional recommendations for green infrastructure in this region include:

- Local and regional agencies should become informed and educate constituents about green infrastructure planning, including guidance on local zoning initiatives for changing community design and transportation systems.
- Continue ongoing education on green infrastructure with key interest groups.
- Continue building local, regional and state partnerships.
- Develop organizational structure and leadership group to maintain long-term green infrastructure planning and implementation efforts.
- Develop and adopt a regional green infrastructure plan among localities in the New River Valley.
- Develop long-term strategies to fund green infrastructure planning and implementation.

Programs

The following recommendations integrate statewide program initiatives into responsive regional strategies for outdoor recreation and conservation. The statewide program areas addressed in this section include: trails and greenways, blueways and water access, historic and landscape resources, scenic resources, scenic highways and Virginia byways, scenic rivers, water-sheds, environmental and land stewardship education, and the private sector. Recommendations are bulleted or numbered and are not sequenced by state or local priorities. Numbered recommendations are site specific to the regional map at the end of this section.

Trails and greenways

For more detailed information, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Recreation Programs and Initiatives, Greenways and Trails.

Statewide trunkline trails

1 The **Great Eastern Trail** will link existing trails from central Alabama to central New York along the Allegheny Highlands. The Southeast Foot Trails Coalition and the Mid-Atlantic Foot Trail Coalition are undertaking this project, which is being sponsored by the American Hiking Society. The Great Eastern trail may run through portions of Bland and Giles County and may connect to the Appalachian Trail.

2 The **Trans-Virginia Southern Trail** will stretch from the Cumberland Gap to the Chesapeake Bay. Comprised of many trails existing or underway, this network will connect the mountains to the sea and stimulate ecotourism across southern Virginia. Trails in the New River Valley will connect with this trail via the New River Trail State Park and potentially up the Roanoke River Trail system.

3 The **Appalachian Trail** is an existing National Scenic Trail. Because of this special designation, localities that host the Appalachian Trail should protect viewsheds along the corridor in their planning and zoning. For more than 75 years the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and its member clubs have worked voluntarily with federal, state and local governments, as well as numerous individual landowners, to solve problems associated with the acquisition, development, administration, management and maintenance of the trail.

Sections of the Appalachian Trail (AT) need additional protection and improvement. The planned Appalachian National Scenic Trail crossing of the New

River in Giles County should be constructed. Special attention should be paid to protecting the setting of the AT corridor as it crosses the New River Valley.

Other trails

- 4 The **Huckleberry Trail** should be included in a comprehensive greenway plan to connect residential areas and regional park and recreational facilities within the Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Montgomery counties area. The Huckleberry Trail is being extended to the west to link with trails in the Pandapas Pond area in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.
- 5 Trail advocacy groups in Radford are expanding the trails already developed by the **Radford Pathways Project** into a comprehensive trails network anchored by trails in **Bisset** and **Wildwood parks**.
- 6 The extension of **New River Trail State Park** into the Town of Pulaski will enhance access to the trail, provide a good orientation to the area for visitors who take advantage of the museum in the Pulaski train station, and increase the local residents' opportunities for recreation.
- 7 A connector trail that will join the **New River Trail** with the **Huckleberry Trail** should be developed.
- 8 Initiatives that combine access to the **New River** with the region's historic heritage, which are used as sustainable economic development tools to enhance tourism in the region, are central to regional recreational objectives. Such efforts could include a series of public use areas and parks along the river to afford access opportunities while providing regional hiking and biking opportunities, principally along the route of Mary Ingles' journey from captivity in Kentucky.
- 9 Support should be given to the development of the **Ellett Valley Loop Trail** system linking Ellett Park and the Ellett Springs along Cedar Run with the Industrial Park and Smart Road in Montgomery County.
- 10 The **Floyd County Trails Plan** should be implemented. The Town of Floyd and the Rocky Knob Recreation Area development on the Blue Ridge Parkway should be connected with a multi-purpose trail.

Water access and blueways

A discussion of the water access in the Commonwealth can be found in Chapter VII: Outdoor

Programs and Initiatives, Water Access and Blueways. Local and regional recommendations include:

- Regional and local agencies should establish cooperative agreements among localities, other agencies and private landowners to meet the increasing need for public access to recreational waters.
 - Regional and local agencies should identify strategies to make additional waterfront resources available for public use.
 - Regional and local agencies should provide adequate support facilities and services, such as restrooms, concessions, parking and maintenance for existing and proposed public water and beach access areas.
 - Regional and local agencies should acquire or maintain access to existing public beaches and water access sites that may be jeopardized by changes in land use or development activities.
- 11 The **New River Blueway** is being planned in Virginia, North Carolina and West Virginia as a full-service water trail with access sites, rest areas, camp sites, re-supply areas and maps to assist users with trip planning. Localities should identify opportunities to increase access sites and use areas along the blueway. A management structure for the blueway needs to be developed in this district.
 - 12 Access sites are needed at appropriate distances along the **New River**, the **Little River**, **Big Reed Island**, **Wolf Creek**, **Craig Creek** and along stretches of major streams suitable for boating and other water sports. There is also a need to improve public access to stocked trout streams in the region. Inadequate parking and access trails create congestion, resource degradation and unsafe conditions during popular fishing days.
 - 13 **Gatewood Park** is a regional park operated by the Town of Pulaski's Parks and Recreation Department. It is a multi-use facility for fishing, boating, picnicking, camping and trail use. Because the reservoir serves as the Town of Pulaski's water supply, land-disturbing activities on lands around the reservoir should not impact water quality.
 - 14 **Hogan Reservoir** includes an extensive watershed around a beautiful lake in Pulaski County that has been declared surplus to county needs. An effort should be made to retain the lake and the watershed property for public use. Boating and fishing access to the lake could be improved and a system of trails could provide for other recreational uses of the property.

Historic and landscape resources

Consideration should be given to evaluating potential historic and landscape recommendations in this region. For more detailed information, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Programs and Initiatives, Historic and Landscape Resources. Regional and local recommendations include:

- Remnants of the Wilderness Road, the Ingle's Ferry site in Pulaski County, and the Ingle's family farm are extant components of the Mary Draper Ingles story. While portions of the historic properties have been protected with a conservation easement, major elements still need to be protected.
- There is a critical need for a county-wide survey of the historic, architectural and archaeological resources of Floyd County.
- In this region, special attention should be given to protecting views from the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail. The Appalachian Trail corridor is especially impacted where it crosses the New River Valley.
- Regional and local agencies should identify historic and archaeological resources that can be used for tourism, recreation and education. These resources should be included in local land use planning and decision-making processes to promote preservation and protection.
- Regional and local agencies should build local historic attractions, historical societies, museums and other tourism organizations in the region to include the Virginia Association of Museums, Virginia Civil War Trails, APVA Preservation Virginia, the Virginia Main Street Program and others to enhance local heritage tourism, educational and recreational offerings.
- Regional and local agencies should encourage local governments and private organizations that own historic properties in the region to manage properties effectively for long-term protection and to maximize public benefit consistent with the nature of the historic property.
- Regional and local agencies should recognize the multiple historic and cultural resources within the rural landscape through rural historic districts.
- Regional and local agencies should support the creation of other heritage area programs to promote tourism and preservation in distinctive regions.

Scenic resources

Consideration should be given to potential scenic recommendations in this region. For more detailed infor-

mation, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Programs and Initiatives, Scenic Resources. Local and regional recommendations include:

- Regional and local agencies should develop corridor management plans for scenic byways, blueways, greenways and scenic rivers to assure preservation of the scenic quality of the corridor.
- Regional and local agencies should protect the scenic value of lands adjacent to publicly owned properties, as well as the scenic value of working agricultural and forestal areas key to maintaining a sense of place and economic vitality of the region. Scenic attributes to be considered include:
 - Encourage development away from mountaintops to protect significant vistas.
 - Consider timber harvesting impacts on key viewsheds.
 - Protect viewsheds along river corridors and scenic byways.
 - Create scenic overlooks and vista cuts along Virginia byways and scenic highways to enhance the visual experience of traveling.

Scenic highways and Virginia byways

Opportunities to traverse Virginia's scenic and cultural landscapes are enhanced through nationally recognized designation. For more detailed information, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Programs and Initiatives, Scenic Highways and Virginia Byways.

Regional and local recommendations include:

- Development of a Virginia Karst Trail is recommended to help educate the public about karst resources in the Commonwealth. This thematic trail will promote resource management goals and best management practices that help landowners protect sensitive karst resources such as caves, springs and sinkholes. The trail will focus on above ground features and tourist caves throughout the state's valley and ridge physiographic province. The Virginia Karst Trail, endorsed by the Virginia Region of the National Speleological Society and the Virginia Cave Board, will benefit the state through increased educational, commercial and tourism opportunities.
- Regional and local agencies should recognize and nominate scenic roads for designation as Virginia byways.
- Regional and local agencies should partner with other state, local and professional organizations to

develop corridor management plans to protect the scenic assets of byway corridors.

- Regional and local agencies should incorporate Virginia byways and scenic highways into local comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances to ensure viewsheds are conserved and the sense of place retained along these corridors.
- Regional and local agencies should support designation of nationally qualified historic corridors to increase civic engagement and foster heritage tourism.

All-American Roads

Blue Ridge Parkway - The diverse history and culture of the southern Appalachian Mountains is showcased along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Split-rail fences, old farmsteads and historic structures complement views of distant mountains, parallel ranges and neighboring valleys. Built during the Depression, the Blue Ridge Parkway is the nation's longest rural parkway. The parkway connects Shenandoah National Park in northern Virginia with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in southern North Carolina. The Blue Ridge area is not just known for its scenic routes, but also its history of 19th Century Appalachian and Native American cultures.

The following road segments have been recommended for consideration as Virginia Byways:

- 15 **Route 8** from Town of Floyd to the Patrick County line in Floyd County.
- 16 **Route 693** and **Route 672** from Route 8 in Montgomery County to Interstate 81 near Pulaski.
- 17 **Route 635** in Giles County from the New River to White Rocks and the West Virginia line.
- 18 **Route 61** in Giles and Bland counties from Narrows to Rocky Gap.
- 19 **Route 730** in Giles and Bland counties from Staffordsville to Route 460.
- 20 **Route 601** in Giles County from Newport to Captain.
- 21 **Route 100** in Bland and Pulaski counties from Pearisburg to Dublin.

Scenic rivers

For detailed information about the Virginia's Scenic Rivers Program and its purpose, benefits and designation process, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Recreation

Programs and Initiative, Scenic Rivers. Regional and local recommendations include:

- Localities should adopt planning tools (e.g., land use overlays, corridor management plans) that will afford special recognition and protection to Virginia's scenic rivers.

The following river segments are potential Virginia scenic rivers and should be evaluated to determine suitability for designation:

- 22 The **Little River** from Route 8 to New River in Floyd and Montgomery counties.
- 23 **Craig Creek** from its headwaters to the Montgomery County line.
- 24 **New River** from Claytor Dam to the West Virginia line in Giles and Montgomery counties.
- 25 **Little Stony Creek** from its headwaters to the New River in Giles County.
- 26 **Big Reed Island Creek** from the Pulaski County line to New River.
- 27 **Walker Creek** from Point Pleasant to the New River.
- 28 **Sinking Creek** from Route 680 to the New River.

Watershed resources

For information about Virginia's watershed programs, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Programs and Initiatives, Virginia's Watershed Programs.

Watershed groups in Region 4:

- New River Roundtable
- Friends of the New River
- Friends of the Rivers of Virginia
- National Committee for the New River
- New River Community Partnership

Environmental and land stewardship education

For detailed information on Environmental and Land Stewardship education, see Chapter VII: Outdoor Programs and Initiatives, Environmental and Land Stewardship Education.

Federal programs

For information on federal programs affecting Virginia's outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities, see Chapter IX-A: Resource Agencies. Local and regional recommendations are listed by agency.

National forests

29 The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests provide much of the public open space and dispersed recreational opportunities in the region. The forest plans include upgraded facilities at **Pandapas Pond** and at the **Cascades Recreation areas**.

30 The USDA Forest Service has acquired the **Glen Alton** property in Giles County. This property has potential for meeting a variety of developed recreation and environmental education needs for the region.

National parks

- Local and regional government, user groups and nonprofits should work with NPS to revise policy that allows mountain bikes to use appropriate national park trails.

31 The **Blue Ridge Parkway** is one of the most successful linear parks in the nation. More than 10 million visitors annually use the parkway and associated facilities in Virginia. Protection of the parkway's viewshed and appropriate use of adjacent lands is crucial to its long-term viability.

- NPS is currently working with Patrick and Floyd counties and other supporting entities to expand and enhance the Rocky Knob Recreation Area. This expansion may require the acquisition of additional land in the vicinity of Rocky Knob.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

32 The Corps of Engineers administers the **Bluestone Dam** and reservoir system on the New River. Approximately 1,100 acres of this project's easement lands are in Virginia. Some of this property is leased to the Town of Glen Lyn, while the remainder is under Corps management. This land represents almost seven miles of public riverfront along both banks of this high quality recreational river that has been studied and found to be eligible for designation as a National Wild and Scenic River. The Corps should conduct an analysis of these lands to determine how best to make them available for public recreational use and assure their proper management.

State facilities and programs

For a discussion of state facilities and programs throughout the entire Commonwealth, see Chapter IX-B: Resource Agencies. Local and regional recommendations are listed by agency or program.

State parks

33 **New River Trail State Park** (765 acres) follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way from Galax to Pulaski for 51.5 miles and on to Fries Branch for 5.5 miles for a total length of 57 miles. The park meanders through Grayson, Carroll, Wythe and Pulaski counties and parallels the scenic and historic New River for 39 miles. The trail has been designated as a National Millennium Trail. Also, located along the trail overlooking the New River, is Shot Tower Historical State Park. The shot tower was built more than 150 years ago to make ammunition for the firearms of the early settlers.

The park master plan calls for the provision of campsites along the trail that can be used by both trail users and canoe campers. A new equestrian campground will be constructed at Jackson's Ferry, and canoe-in sites will be developed on Baker Island and Hiwassee Island. Foster Falls is being developed as the main park headquarters and will include a historic interpretive village, hotel, concessions, day use picnic area, new park office and a new maintenance yard. Through the 2002 General Obligation Bond, funds were allocated to make trail improvements, expand the water distribution system and for acquisitions. Also funded are renovations to the historic Foster Falls complex, which includes renovations to the hotel and office area.

There are multiple access points along the New River Trail, which create numerous opportunities for connector trails to surrounding towns and communities. The park also serves as a link to other outdoor recreational areas, including a town park in Fries, Mount Rogers National Recreational Area, and four Department of Game and Inland Fisheries boat launches. The New River Trail and Grayson Highlands state parks are connected by an extension of the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail. This combined trail system includes more than 300 miles of trails and creates a link between the New River Trail State Park and the Virginia Creeper Trail on the southern end of Mount Rogers NRA. The park is also involved in the New River Blueway, which offers several opportunities for canoe-in camping.

DCR should complete development of the master plan for New River Trail State Park to include the following actions:

- DCR should work closely with local governments to link **New River Trail State Park** with the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg.
- DCR should develop planned overnight facilities at the Horseshoe Bend recreation area.
- DCR should complete development of planned support facilities for the New River Blueway.
- DCR should continue to coordinate with Pulaski to connect New River Trail State Park to the former train station.

34 The revised **Claytor Lake State Park** Master Plan was adopted in 2005. The plan calls for improved campsites, renovation of the marina, construction of five family lodges, a 130-room lodge and overnight complex with restaurant, and an aquatic research center. The 2002 GOB for state parks provided funding for new cabins, the improvement of campsites, and the construction of a restaurant at the marina. The views from the park of Claytor Lake and the opposite shore are very scenic. Much of the far shoreline is owned by Appalachian Power Company and is in a natural vegetated condition. DCR should work with APCO to acquire conservation easements on those lakeshore properties to protect the shoreline from additional development. In addition to maintaining the scenic beauty of the lake, this will also improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

State natural area preserves

Natural area preserves within the district are Chestnut Ridge and Clover Hollow in Giles County, Buffalo Mountain in Floyd County and Pedlar Hills Glades in Montgomery County.

As of November 2006, 608 occurrences of 197 rare species and natural communities have been documented in the New River Valley Planning District by DCR. Seventy-four species are globally rare and eight occurrences are of federally threatened or endangered species. One hundred twenty-nine conservation sites have been identified in the district; only 60 (47 percent) have received any level of protection through ownership or management by state, federal and non-government organizations. However, only five sites are protected well enough to ensure the long-term viability of the rare species and natural communities they support.

DCR recommends that all unprotected conservation sites, and all unprotected portions of partially protected sites, be targeted for future land conservation efforts. The appropriate method of protection will vary with each site, but may include placing the site on Virginia's Registry of Natural Areas, developing a voluntary management agreement with the landowner, securing a conservation easement through a local land trust, acquiring the site through a locality or local land trust, dedicating the site as a natural area preserve with the current owner, or acquiring the site as a state-owned natural area preserve.

Within Region 4, DCR is particularly interested in protecting:

- Water quality for globally rare aquatic communities.
- Significant caves and karst areas.
- Terrestrial limestone communities in Montgomery County.
- Significant wetlands in Floyd County.
- Additional lands around Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve and Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve.

Montgomery County is willing to develop a trailhead parking area and to share the cost of a bridge over the South Fork Roanoke River to improve public access to the Pedlar Hills Glades Natural Area Preserve.

Information about the location of conservation sites and the natural heritage resources they contain, as well as management assistance, is available to local planners from DCR's Natural Heritage staff (see Chapter IX-B-5).

State fish and wildlife management areas

- The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries should continue to investigate opportunities to acquire in-holdings in their WMAs and to improve each area with trails and other structures for wildlife viewing and other outdoor recreation. They should also acquire additional lands wherever feasible to provide additional access for public hunting, fishing, boating and other wildlife viewing recreation.
- DGIF should continue to work with local and regional governments to support the Birding and Wildlife Trail program.

Transportation programs

- Local and regional agencies should develop alternatives to the use of private automobiles for daily activities. Transit systems, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, improved community design, as well as a change in people's attitudes toward transportation alternatives will be needed for the transportation system of the future to meet capacity needs and energy constraints.
- Local and regional agencies should work with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to implement Context Sensitive Solutions that accommodate multiple transportation modes.
- Local and regional agencies should recognize the need for a network of low-speed, low-volume roadways used by equestrians, pedestrians and cyclists, and they should include protections for this network in their comprehensive plan.
- Local and regional agencies should encourage the development of a permanent process for integrating the recommendations of local public health agencies, and they should include "active living" opportunities into all phases of transportation planning, land use planning and project design.
- The New River Valley localities have developed a regional bicycle-pedestrian plan. This plan outlines the trails, bikeways and walkways needed to meet both recreational and alternative transportation objectives. Envisioned is a comprehensive network of shared roadways, bike lanes and independent trails. New facilities will be developed in coordination with road improvements, land development projects and through individual project initiatives.

35 **Interstate Bike Route 76** should be studied to determine if the trail is still located on the best roads. Recent development has changed traffic levels and some sections of the route carry too much vehicle traffic to be suitable for BR 76.

Other state lands

For a discussion of other state lands, see Chapter IX-C: Resource Agencies.

The following state-owned lands contain significant undeveloped open space that may have some potential for local recreational use. Each site should be assessed and, where appropriate, a cooperative agreement should be developed to make these resources available for local use as parks and open space.

36 The **New River Community College** in Pulaski County has 100 acres of land that may be suitable for the development of additional recreational facilities.

37 The **Fishburn Tract**, a Virginia Tech property in Montgomery County, consists of 1,200 acres on Prices Mountain. The tract is suitable for a variety of activities including outdoor education and numerous university missions.

38 **Whitethorne Plantation**, a 900-acre Virginia Tech property located on the New River in Montgomery County, has considerable outdoor recreational potential. Nature study, hiking, fishing, river use and other dispersed recreation may be compatible with the property's primary function as an agricultural research station.

39 Virginia Tech owns a 120-acre site located east of Whitethorne Plantation near Price's Fork called **Kentland Farms**. This site should be evaluated for its recreational potential.

40 In addition to Radford University's primary campus properties and the numerous on-campus sports facilities in the City of Radford, the university has recently acquired the Saint Albans property containing approximately 75 acres. Portions of the property, called **RU-West**, front on the New River and should be evaluated for their recreational potential.

41 The Radford University Foundation owns **Selu**, a 200-acre parcel of undeveloped land along the Little River in Montgomery County. This property is currently used as an outdoor educational facility and has dispersed recreation potential. A trail should be developed that would connect Selu with the New River Heritage Museum and the Radford trail system.

Local and regional parks and recreation departments

For a discussion of local and regional parks and recreation departments, see Chapter IX-D: Resource Agencies. Local and regional recommendations include:

- Explore reclamation of abandoned landfills into new and needed parks.
- Consider cooperative management for the recreational use of private, corporate, state or federally owned lands in order to increase local access and meet outdoor recreation needs.

- 42 Efforts should be made to ensure the protection of habitat in **Wildwood Park** in Radford including the acquisition of available buffer lands.
- 43 The Town of Pearisburg should continue the development of **Whitt River Bend Park** as a component of the **New River Blueway**.
- 44 It is recommended that the approximately 200 acres of the Montgomery County Landfill site be completed closed and made safe for use as additions to the **Montgomery County Mid-County Regional Park**.
- 45 It is recommended that the **Castle Rock Public Recreation Area** in Giles County be considered for facility development initiatives, including swimming pool improvements, land acquisition, access to the New River and expansion to the buildings and grounds.
- 46 A regional park should be developed at **Heritage Community Park and Natural Area** in Blacksburg. Development plans should be sensitive to the special biological areas on the property.
- 47 Pulaski County's **Randolph Park** in Dublin is a major, developed recreation area with facilities for a wide variety of recreational activities and sports.

Private sector

Much of the demand for outdoor recreation is met by the private sector. Because of the abundance of water resources in the region, there are a number of water-

based recreational opportunities that could be explored. For a discussion of private sector role, see Chapter IX-E: Resource Agencies.

Developed campgrounds, resident summer camps for children, golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, marinas and indoor recreational facilities help meet the needs identified in the 2006 VOS. Entrepreneurial opportunities should be evaluated for the establishment of outfitter services for canoeing and kayaking, boat launches, canoe-in campgrounds, multi-field sports complexes and swimming pools. Public lands also offer opportunities for adventure sports, hiking and backcountry camping.

- 48 **Claytor Lake Dam**, operated by Appalachian Power Company, is being re-licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The Dam creates Claytor Lake, a 5,500-acre impoundment of the New River. This lake provides the only power boating, sailing, jet skiing, and water skiing opportunities in the region. During the re-licensing process, APCO will be working with the citizens and government agencies to identify opportunities to increase outdoor recreation facilities within the project area. Currently there are several local parks, Claytor Lake State Park, New River Trail State Park and several state maintained boat ramps helping to meet public access and use needs on the lake. APCO should work with DCR and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation or other conservation organizations to protect the remaining undeveloped shoreline of the lake from further development by placing conservation easements on the land.

Table X-4. Region 4 (New River Valley Planning District) Existing and Projected Outdoor Recreation Needs

Activity	Activity Days	Demand	Units	Supply	2010 Needs	2020 Needs
Baseball	218,241	43	fields	66	-23	-19
Basketball	267,841	64	goals	93	-29	-23
Bicycling	235,601	17	miles	NI		
Mountain	38,853	3	miles	NI		
Other	196,747	14	miles	NI		
Lake, river and bay use (combined)	196,747	3,526	water acres	4,712	-1,186	-833
Power boating	93,248	2,248	water acres	S		
Sailing	13,227	114	water acres	S		
Saltwater fishing	46,624	262	water acres	S		
Jet ski, personal watercraft	29,760	466	water acres	S		
Water skiing, towed on water	13,888	435	water acres	S		
Camping	267,510	1,578	sites	1,937	-359	-201
Tent camping	152,934	902	sites	397	505	595
Developed camping	114,576	676	sites	1,540	-864	-797
Fitness trail use	137,227	11	mile trails	39	-28	-27
Fields (combined)	281,068	59	fields	65	-6	0
Football	105,814	22	fields	65	-43	-41
Soccer	175,254	37	fields	-	37	41
Stream use (combined)	619,837	394	stream miles	18	376	415
Freshwater fishing	538,989	379	stream miles	S		
Human-powered boating	29,099	7	stream miles	S		
Rafting	16,533	3	stream miles	S		
Tubing	35,216	5	stream miles	S		
Golfing	208,982	7	courses	207	-4	-4
Hiking, backpacking	260,401	134	trail miles	194	-60	-47
Horseback riding	74,400	32	miles	46	-14	-11
In-line skating	44,640	3	miles	NI		
Jogging, running	1,074,671	86	mile trails	NI		
Nature study, programs	45,467	6	sites	1	5	6

Note: Demand multipliers used to create this chart are based on the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's 2006 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* as measured at the regional level. Additional analysis is required to adjust these results for local conditions.

NA: not applicable, no standard needed

S: same as combined

NS: not inventoried separately

NI: not inventoried

(-) indicates surplus

Table X-4. Region 4 (New River Valley Planning District) Existing and Projected Outdoor Recreation Needs – continued

Activity	Activity Days	Demand	Units	Supply	2010 Needs	2020 Needs
Picnicking away from home	225,681	586	tables	1,140	-554	-495
Skateboarding	125,654	39	sites	NI		
Snow skiing or snowboarding	28,272	1	ski lifts	-	1	1
Softball	234,774	42	fields	36	6	10
Sunbathing, relaxing on beach	306,529	22	beach acres	8	14	16
Swimming	1,653,340	111		NI		
Outdoor area	829,977	85	beach acres	8	77	85
Outdoor pools	540,642	23	pools	21	2	4
Indoor pools	282,721	3	pools	1	2	3
Tennis	128,961	81	courts	127	-46	-38
Used a playground	444,748	63	sites	57	6	13
Visiting gardens	43,979	5	sites	NI		
Visiting historic sites	242,545	21	sites	NI		
Visiting natural areas	308,844	52	sites	NI		
Volleyball	77,707	23	courts	6	17	19
Hunting	530,722	87,033	acres	116,749	-29,716	-20,996
Drive for pleasure	1,096,164	NA	NA	NI		
Driving motorcycle off road	44,640	20	miles	-	20	22
Driving 4-wheel-drive off road	186,827	NA	NA	NS		
Walking for pleasure	3,556,334	NA	NA	NI		
Bird watching	43,648	NA		NI		
Other	95,894	NA	NA	NI		

Note: Demand multipliers used to create this chart are based on the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's 2006 *Virginia Outdoors Survey* as measured at the regional level. Additional analysis is required to adjust these results for local conditions.

NA: not applicable, no standard needed

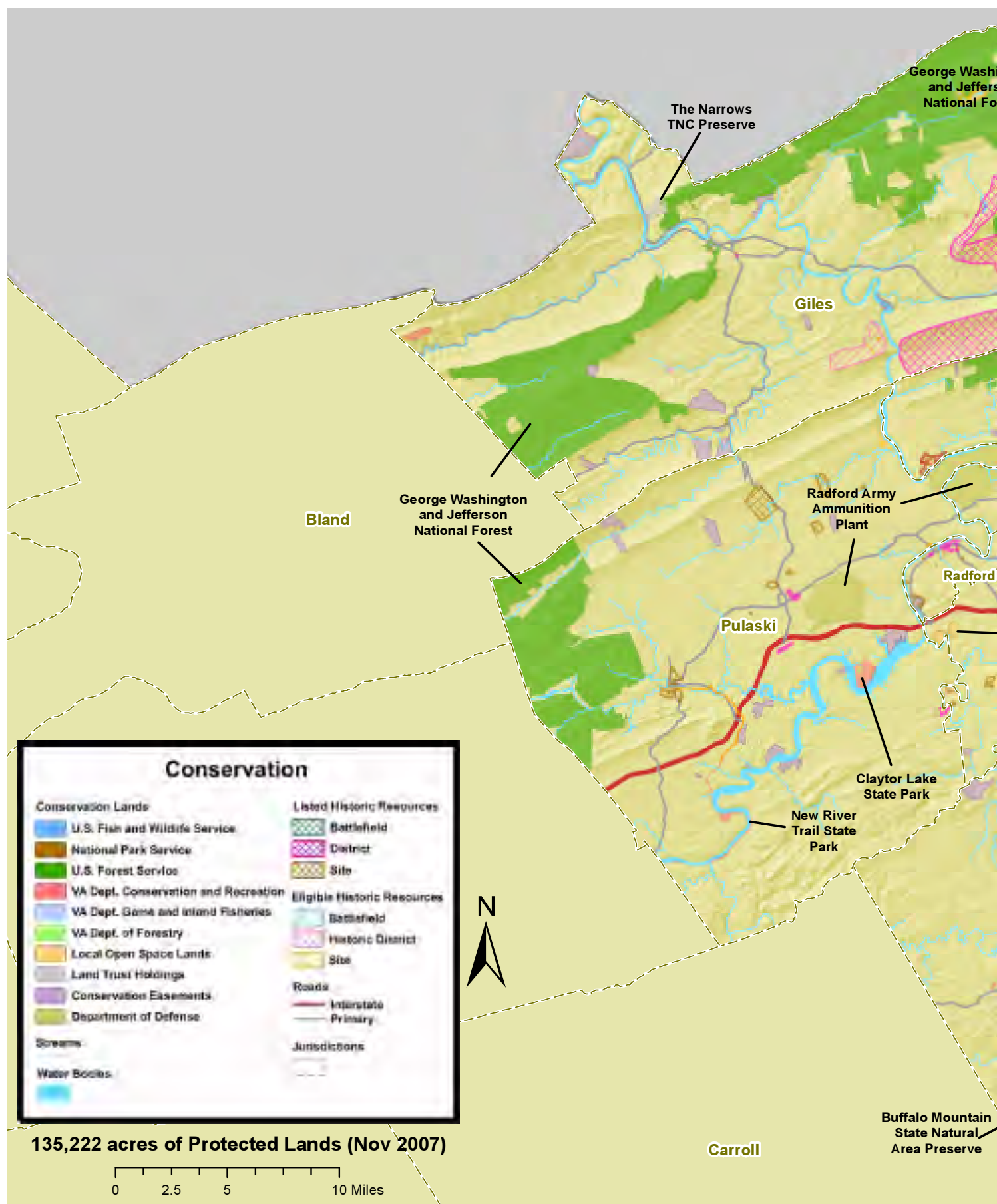
S: same as combined

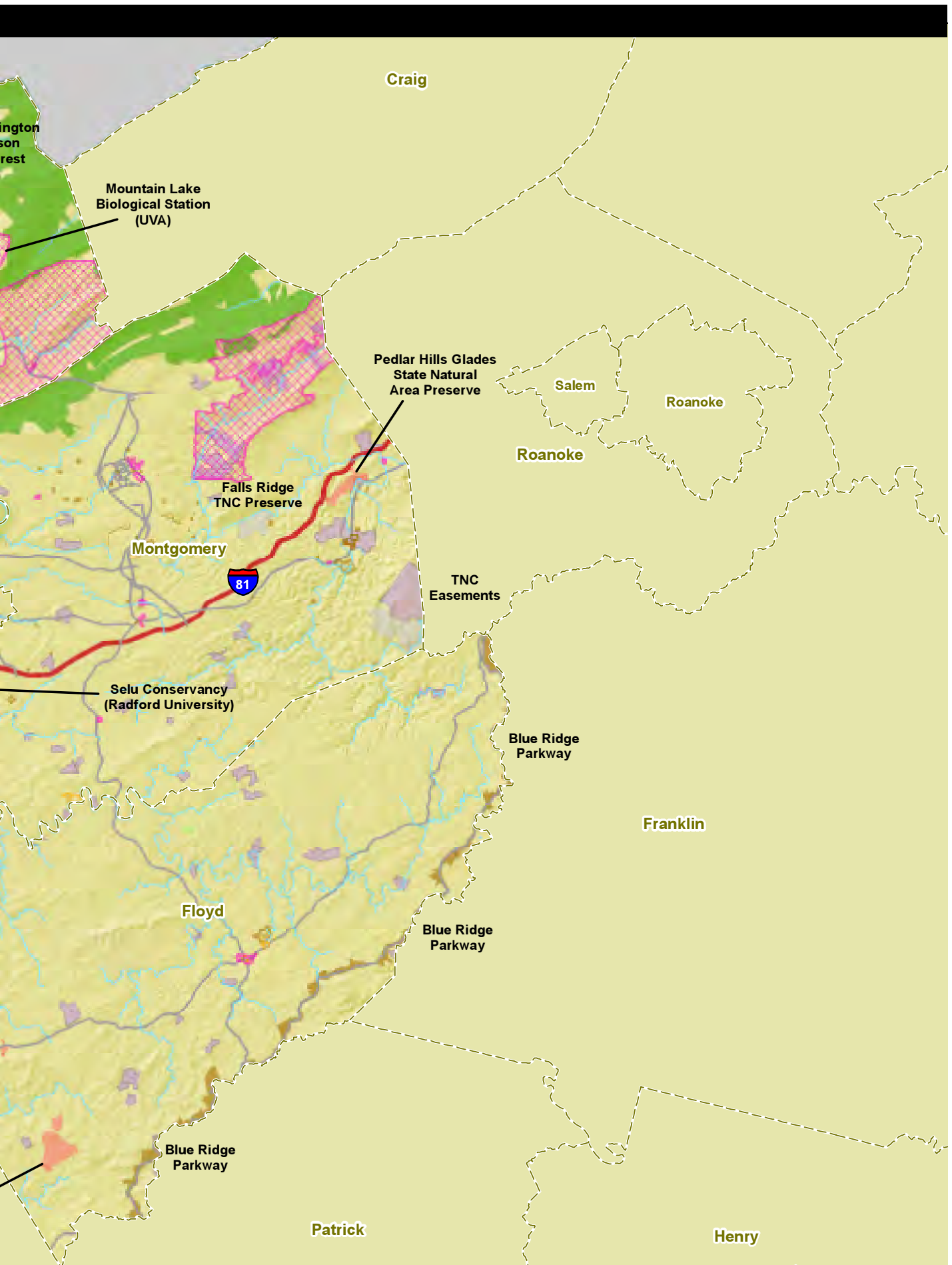
NS: not inventoried separately

NI: not inventoried

(-) indicates surplus

Map X-8. Region 4 (New River Valley Planning District) Conservation Lands





Map X-9. Region 4 (New River Valley Planning District) Outdoor Recreation

